

Love the Way God Designed It

For years of my Christian life, I was miserable. At the time, I honestly didn't know what my problem was until God spoke to my heart one day and said, "You're selfish. You've studied My Word about spiritual warfare, prosperity, healing, having power and authority as a believer in Christ ... but how much time have you studied about My love?"

That was the beginning of discovering that I would never be happy and have peace until I learned to love like Jesus loves.

One of the first messages God put on my heart to teach was titled "Tell Them I Love Them." At first, I didn't want to do it. I thought, *People already know You love them, God. I want to teach a really powerful message ... something they haven't heard before.*

But God showed me that if people really knew He loved them and what that means, then they would live much differently than they do.

How Real Love Makes a Real Difference

When we know and experience God's love, we can share it with others. Imagine what the world would be like if everyone who calls themselves a Christian would really love each other with His love.

Think about it. There would be no gossip, no judgment or criticism, no exclusive attitudes that make others feel rejected, and people's needs would be met much more than they are.

We can get a good picture of what God's love looks like by looking at the life of Jesus.

John 13:1c says Jesus "loved them to the last and to the highest degree" (AMPC). In the following verses, He

demonstrates what it means to love others like this.

In those days, there were servants who washed people's feet when they came to visit. It's likely they were considered the lowliest servants in the household. So when Jesus, the Son of God Himself, got up from supper, took the servant's towel, and proceeded to wash the disciples' feet, it surprised them.

His message to them was to love one another by being a servant. Because God wants His love to flow through us and touch other people's lives.

Discover What Real Love Is

Love is not just a feeling or a theory; it's a decision we make and an action we take. It's so important for us to study what the Bible teaches about God's love so we can learn to love like Jesus. We also have to pray for God to help us learn how to walk in love—to be a servant who has a passion to help others.

Matthew 7:12a (NIV) says, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you." This is so critical because if we want to have meaningful relationships with others, we need to invest in their lives by giving them support, encouraging them, helping to meet their needs—serving them as we're able to do it.

It's easy to want to help people you like or those you want to impress. But when it comes to doing something for someone you don't know or someone you don't have a natural interest in, it can be a different story. Sometimes we don't even feel like serving our family.

I've learned that what I do in front of people publicly won't really mean anything if I'm not living a life that pleases God at home, too. I thought I would die of frustration before I finally got this, so I know it's not easy.

It's an Intentional Lifestyle

We have to realize we're naturally selfish, and we must make a conscious decision to think of others on purpose or we'll miss many opportunities to serve them.

I want to encourage you to read John 13 and pay close attention to what Jesus did and said. Spend some time studying Scriptures about God's love and pray for Him to show you ways you can serve the people in your life. You'll probably find it's easier and simpler than you thought it would be to help make someone's life better.

God wants us to enjoy our lives. But He wants us to die to self, get over being the center of our world and begin to focus on looking for someone who needs our help every day. When you do this, you'll discover you're actually more satisfied, content, peaceful and happy than you've ever been in your life!